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**Contact:** James Ramey  
(614)728-2100

## **2007 CENSUS SHOWS GROWING TRENDS IN U.S. AGRICULTURE**

Reynoldsburg, Ohio – The 2007 Census of Agriculture counted 2,204,792 farms in the United States, according to results released today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS).

Since the last census in 2002, the number of reported U.S. farms increased 4 percent. In Ohio the number of farms decreased by 2.5 percent to 75,861.

“The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of the nation’s farms and ranches and the people who operate them,” said Jim Ramey, director of the NASS Ohio Field Office. “It provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every county in the nation.”

Nationally, the latest census results show a continuing trend towards more small and very large farms and fewer mid-sized operations – a trend echoed at the state level. Overall, the majority of U.S. farms are smaller operations with more than half characterized as residential/lifestyle or retirement farms.

In addition to looking at all aspects of farming, the Census of Agriculture provides the most comprehensive look at operator demographics – with 2007 results indicating that farmers continue to become more diverse. The 2007 Census counted nearly 30 percent more female principal farm operators in the United States. Nationwide, the count of Hispanic operators grew by 10 percent, and the counts of American Indian, Asian and Black farm operators increased as well.

“The Census helps illustrate growing trends throughout agriculture, both nationally and in Ohio,” said Ramey. “This is an exciting time for the entire agriculture community because the census is the voice of every farmer and rancher – regardless of size or type of operation.”

Complete results of the 2007 Census of Agriculture, including first-ever numbers about on-farm energy generation, community-supported agriculture arrangements and historic barns are available at [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov).

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